

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, he is absolutely correct. The people of Wisconsin have an independent tradition and the people of Indiana have an independent tradition. And the Founding Fathers knew, although Indiana and Wisconsin were not in existence at the time, that we have inherited that belief that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. We have a healthy skepticism of a concentration of power.

Our Founding Fathers knew that we needed a balance. We needed individuals with rights. We needed a Court, we needed a Congress, a President. We needed strong States. A lot of people believed that going to a Constitution as opposed to Articles of Confederation was consolidating too much power.

Back then, they did not think about departments of education and national tests. That was far from it. They were doing minimal Federal Government. Our Founding Fathers had it right. They were fearful that power concentrated, as it was in Europe, would lead to the type of tracking in the education systems, would lead to the type of monarchy dependency, that we would look to our capital city for all the solutions rather than inside our souls and inside our own families and look to government to fix the problems of the poor rather than sacrificing our own time and money to reach out to those who are hurting.

Mr. Speaker, that is indeed what is happening in America. We need to stand up. And this budget deal and the tax cuts were an important first step. Now we have to follow through on some of the details, because we have the big picture right. We need to make sure that they do not back-door us as we go through the actual appropriations bills.

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, I thought I would conclude my hour this evening by wrapping up what we have been talking about. The discussion has been about more Washington and more Washington control of our lives versus less Washington and less Washington control of our lives, and the integrity of this Government in general.

We started with the past. We started with before 1995. We started with the broken promises of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill, how they promised to get to a balanced budget but never got around to doing it; how in 1993 the way they decided to get to a balanced budget was to raise taxes on the people, and the people in 1994 said: Enough of that stuff; We do not want any more broken promises; We do not want any more tax increases. They elected a new group of people to the House of Representatives.

They elected Republicans to control the House and Republicans to control the Senate and left the Democrat President, in all fairness, to complete this picture.

But from 1995 to 1997, things have been very, very different. We, too, laid out a plan to balance the Federal bud-

et, and we are in the third year of that 7-year plan. We are not only on track but we are going to have the first balanced budget in fiscal year 1998, the first time in 30 years we are going to actually have a balanced Federal budget; Washington is not going to spend more money than it takes in.

Mr. Speaker, how has this happened? It has been done not through tax increases like back in 1993 but at the same time we lower taxes. It has been done by curtailing the appetite of Washington spending.

It has been a battle; there is no question about it. Washington spending is still going up, but at a much slower rate than what it was going up before. It was going up almost twice as fast as inflation before 1995. By slowing that growth of Washington spending, we are at a point where we have both a balanced budget and lower taxes; first time since 1969 for the balanced budget, first time in 16 years that we have had a tax cut, and Medicare has been restored.

At the same time, we have to look forward to the future and ask ourselves what is coming next. The next in the picture is, we are going to put us on a plan to repay the entire Federal debt. As we repay that \$5.3 trillion debt, that puts us in a position as a Nation where we can give to our children the legacy of a debt-free country.

At the same time we are repaying that debt, we are putting that money back into the Social Security Trust Fund that has been taken out over the last 15 to 20 years, so Social Security is once again solvent and secure for our senior citizens. This plan entails keeping one-third of our surpluses and dedicating it to additional tax cuts as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very, very changed discussion in Washington, from past broken promises and higher taxes, to the present of promises kept on track and ahead of schedule in balancing the budget, lower taxes and a restored Medicare, and a future that includes paying off the Federal debt with additional tax cuts, restoring the Social Security Trust Fund, and, most important of all, as we repay that Federal debt, we can give this Nation to our children absolutely debt free.

What better legacy, what better hopes and dreams could we have in this Nation than that plan for our future?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REDMOND). The Chair would remind all Members to refrain from references to occupants of the gallery.

SLIPPERY SLOPE OF DEFENSE BUDGET CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. HUNTER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago I submitted an article for the prestigious military magazine on military affairs, "Proceedings." In that article, I outlined the slippery slope that we are presently on with respect to our deteriorating national defense and where I think we should be going, what I think we should be doing, my opinion, and what future actions should be taken.

Mr. Speaker, my staff mentioned to me tonight when they read the article, and I had mentioned service leaders who had not spoken up over the past several years, "Do you think people will think you are referring to Chuck Krulak, the Commandant of the Marine Corps?" And I said, "Absolutely not."

Mr. Speaker, I am down here on the floor tonight to make sure that folks understand that that is not the case, because Chuck Krulak is one of the finest Marine Corps Commandants and one of the finest Marine warriors of this century.

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I think of Chuck in the great tradition and legend of guys like Chesty Puller and Gimlet I. Butler, great Marines, and Chuck's own father, Brute Krulak, who is one of the great Marine warriors of all time.

I talked, Mr. Speaker, about the deteriorating infrastructure of national security and the fact that just a few years ago, when we won Desert Storm, we had 18 Army divisions. We are now down to 10. We had 24 fighter air wings. We are now down to 13. We had 546 naval ships. We are now down to 346. And as this decline continues, very few Americans understand what is going on.

I am reminded also that it was General Krulak who spoke up and put down in writing the fact that the Marines are about 93 million M-16 bullets short of what they need to fight and win two regional conflicts; that is, two regional wars and have enough money to continue to keep their training rotations going and keep the troops coming in.

If you look at those two regional wars, we have actually fought both of the wars that we think we might have to have. We fought the war in the Middle East, in Iraq, and we fought the war in Korea. We only have 10 Army divisions today, but when we fought the war in the Middle East, we used some 8 Army divisions. That only leaves 2. And yet when we fought the war in Korea, when the North Koreans, on June 25, 1950 invaded the southern part of the peninsula, we used 7 Army divisions in that war along with a large contingency of Marines. So we used 8 in the Middle East, 7 in the Korean peninsula. That is 15 Army divisions. And yet today we only have 10 Army divisions.

Similarly, we have slashed our air power, almost slashed it in half, from 24 fighter air wings to only 13.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are continuing with this low level defense budget to go